

Capt. Cesco Pfauth, 8th Special Operations Squadron, embraces his family after returning to Duke Field, Tuesday. Captain Pfauth was among the last members of his unit to return home after a series of deployments since Sept. 24, 2001.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Ali Flisek

'Blackbirds' welcomed home following series of deployments

By Capt. Tom Knowles and
Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson
Public Affairs

Approximately nine Airmen assigned to the 8th Special Operations Squadron at Duke Field were amongst the last members of the unit to return home Tuesday, following a series of highly successful deployments in support of operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Secure Tomorrow.

"This isn't a ceremony that needs a lot of words," said Col. Tim Hale, 16th Special Operations Wing vice commander. "Watching the aircraft land and taxi with the (American) flag

waving out of the hatch, speaks for itself. When you see families waiting for loved ones, husbands and fathers arriving to open arms, we should all have a lump in our throat after that."

The squadron, known as the "Blackbirds," has been continuously deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism since Sept. 24, 2001.

Such a high operations tempo led to the squadron being named the Air Force's most deployed active-duty squadron in 2002 and 2003. When the World Trade Center fell Sept. 11, 2001, the 8th SOS was propelled into Operation Enduring Freedom. During that time, nearly the

See **WELCOME**, Page 6

Base fitness centers 'reach for the stars'

By Airman 1st Class James Dickens
Public Affairs

The 16th Services Squadron was presented with an award for achieving a five-star rating, the highest rating in Air Force fitness, recently.

Col. Timothy Hale, 16th Special Operations Wing vice commander, presented a plaque to 16th SVS representatives consisting of: Master Sgt. Don Martinez, fitness complex superintendent; John Proctor, fitness complex director; and Nate Harris, the Riptide Fitness Center manager and other staff members during a meeting Feb. 2.

"The 16th SVS made numerous improvements to fitness programs and facilities in order to earn the highest rating possible," Colonel Hale said.

According to Sergeant Martinez the rating was based on the entire fitness operation including: programs, training, facilities and customer service.

"The addition of the Riptide Fitness Center is what really put us over the top and enabled us to win this accolade," Sergeant Martinez said.

The \$4.2 million facility contains all new state-of-the art equipment, which seemingly impressed the judges.

"The Nautilus Fit Advisor, a computerized personal trainer, has been the biggest hit at the Riptide," Mr. Harris said. "It's like having your own personal trainer with you at all times."

"Another big hit among service members has been the Commando Fitness Center's Parent Tot room, which allows parents to workout while watching their children play in the daycare," Sergeant Martinez said.

The 16th SVS isn't going to stop with just one five-star rating though.

"We're looking into adding new sports to accommodate everyone so we can keep the prestige of the five-star rating," Sergeant Martinez said.

The plaque is displayed in the Aderholt Fitness Center's lobby.

The Commander's Open Line is your direct line to me for questions or suggestions about subjects of concern to the Hurlburt Field community.

I really appreciate your feedback. To receive a response, call 884-OPEN (6736) or e-mail your concerns to commando@hurlburt.af.mil. Be sure to include your name, unit and telephone number.

Open lines of general interest will be printed in the COMMANDO. I'll answer the others by letter or a phone call.

However, the quickest and most efficient way to resolve a problem is to talk directly to the agency responsible. This gives them an opportunity to help you and perhaps improve their process.

Col.
O.G. Mannon

Commander expresses thanks for battlelab support

By Col. Bruce "Biff" Sturk
Command and Control Battlelab commander



For the first eight years of our unit's life, the members of the Command and Control Battlelab have enjoyed the tremendous hospitality, weather and second-to-none lifestyle of Hurlburt Field and the Emerald Coast.

As the C2 Battlelab commander, I'd like to pass along the extreme support exhibited by the leadership and personnel of Air Force Special Operations Command, the 16th Special Operations Wing, the 505th Command and Control Wing and the entire Hurlburt Field family.

From our humble beginnings on Okaloosa Island to our current facilities, we couldn't have provided the Air Force the many command and control advances the C2 Battlelab has produced without this great relationship between our small tenant unit and this supporting wing.

Our close association with the world class C2 experts from the 505th Command and Control Wing and the 16th SOW's premier Special Operations cadre have guided and informed our efforts over the last eight years, leading to many of our successful initiatives.

Our Operations Planning and Execution Lite initiative a portable Air Operations Center tool suite for the planning and execution of small, independent air operations, is ideal for the Special Operations Command and we've enjoyed working closely with the SOF community to ensure it meets your needs.

Military efforts make Iraqi election, progress successful

By Col. Ken Rodriguez
720th Special Tactics Group

Recently, Iraqi citizens voted in great numbers. Reports put the number at 60 percent of registered voters.

There are stories of entire Iraqi families, dressed in their best clothes, walking miles to the polls, then waiting bravely to vote despite terrorists' threats to turn the streets into "rivers of blood."

Iraqis voted by the millions – not just for their first democratically elected leaders since the foundation of their republic – but also for the future of their nation and of the Arab world. This is evidence to the entire world that the great majority of

Iraqis want democracy.

As President George Bush said, "The Iraqi people have firmly rejected the anti-democratic ideology of the terrorists...and made this election a resounding success."

The insurgency will never be won by military force alone. Iraqis must take charge of their future by choice, and violence must be replaced by peaceful politics. This election is about Iraqis taking charge of their future.

People should know that this is an important strategic victory for the American military – as important as any military victory we've had to date in this war on terror, and you've helped win it.

The Visualization of Expeditionary Sites Tool initiative allows warfighters to view geospatial site survey data and could greatly help AFSOC with improved time sensitive planning of operations into air facilities worldwide.

Our biggest initiative yet, Theater Battle Operations Net-centric Environment, draws on the OPEL capability and will dramatically improve the tools and databases used by personnel in an Air Operations Center. TBONE incorporates a vision of dynamic planning and execution of the Air Tasking Order and Air Control Order that provides warfighters in the AOC and at wing level a unified data environment and a fully integrated, scalable, collaborative system for strategy development, planning, execution and assessment of the Air Battle Plan.

We look forward to the opportunities and challenges of transitioning our mission and facilities to Langley Air Force Base, Va. At the same time, we'll undoubtedly miss the tremendous reservoir of Special Operations and the command and control subject matter expertise Hurlburt Field provides. We intend to continue to draw on the professionalism, camaraderie, and dedication of the Special Operations community and the 505th CCW.

Despite our physical move, I assure you we'll maintain a professional relationship with the 16th SOW and 505th CCW. That will ensure we continue to draw on your world class C2 and Special Ops understanding of where C2 should advance to support our future warfighting capability and push the Command and Control capability to the next level in support of this great country's efforts in the war on terrorism and other Air Force missions vital to this nation's interest.

By your strength, your commitment, bravery and deeds, we've accomplished this victory. Whether deployed or at home station, serving as a Reservist or civilian, you played an important role in this great victory. We're still far from being "out of the woods." The insurgents have vowed to fight on relentlessly. We still have much to do before the final victory. Hold the course warriors, we're moving forward. Remain stronger, smarter, quicker and more committed than the militants. Their support is waning and the good guys are gaining.

Thank you for all you do for this great country of ours. It remains my pleasure to serve with each of you.

This commercial enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. It's published by the Northwest Florida Daily News, a private firm that isn't connected with the U.S. Air Force, under an exclusive written contract with the 16th Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

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Submitting articles

The deadline for submissions to the COMMANDO is 4 p.m. Wednesday for briefs the week prior to publication. Articles may be submitted on IBM format computer disk or via electronic mail. Non-electronic submissions must be typed, double-spaced. All submissions must include the name and telephone number of a person to call for questions.

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DUI Tracker

Feb. 4-10: 1 DUI

This year: 4

DUIs for 2004: 42

Last DUI: 16th Special Operations Squadron, Feb. 6

Don't Drink and Drive. Call AADD at 884-8844

Potential saves this year: 71

16th OG...4

16th MXG...25

16th MSG...29

16th MDG...54

Individual groups get a down day for 60 consecutive days without a DUI. Totals are current as of Feb. 10.



Road repairs

Simpson Avenue will be repaved next week. As a result, access to parking areas at J.R. Rockers, Building 90369, and the entrance to Live Oak Terrace via Bakke Street will be limited. One traffic lane will be open during various phases of the project. Traffic controls and other personnel will assist motorists during construction.

Emergency vehicles will have precedence when necessary. Some delays may occur due to poor weather prior to or on scheduled workdays. Your cooperation and patience are appreciated. For more information, call Gary Ross at 884-7524.

Judges getting 'taste' of base dining facilities

Hurlburt Field competes against five AF bases for prestigious Hennessy title

By Vanessa Adame
Public Affairs

Hurlburt Field dining facilities are gearing up for one of the most anticipated days in Air Force food service.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, a team of advisors and evaluators will visit The Reef, The Oasis and Riptide dining facility during the judging of the 49th Annual Hennessy Trophy Awards Program.

As part of the competition, judges will review the entire scope of each installation's food service program evaluating management effectiveness, force readiness support, food quality, employee and customer relations, resource conservation, training and safety awareness.

According to Food Service Officer, Dave Mickler, preparation for the prestigious contest is an ongoing process.

"You're always working on team building and always trying to stay abreast of the industry-keeping up your facilities, buying the best equipment for your folks to work with," he said.

"But most importantly, we keep our customers in mind; we want to know if they're happy with our service and if they're getting hot, nutritious meals," said Mr. Mickler.

The base dining facilities, which have won the accolade five times in the last seven years, have made several additions and improvements since the Hennessy competition last year.

In August, the Riptide dining facility opened its doors with a full a la carte menu; the Oasis also reopened that same month as an expanded flight kitchen, extending its services with a full carry-out lunch and dinner service. The Reef has also upgraded its salad bar and stir fry grill since then.

"We try to remember: you're only as good as your last meal," said Mr. Mickler.

"I couldn't be more proud of our food service professionals; they never cease to amaze me," said Lt. Col. Chris Wright, 16th Services Squadron commander. "They do their best every single day supporting the 16th Special Operations Wing mission-win or lose, I assure you, you won't find a better operation in the Air Force," he said.

"(If we win,) it just means that all the hard work we've done the entire year is being recognized," said Mr. Mickler.

Hurlburt Field is competing in the multiple-category against RAF Mildenhall Air Force Base, Keesler, Eglin, Holloman, Fairchild and Kadena Air Force Bases.

The winner is expected to be announced in March or April.

RED HORSE member named AF NCO of quarter

By Sgt. Chad Swaim
CJTF-HOA Public Affairs

Camp Lemonier, Djibouti - Two Air Force members were recently recognized here for their accomplishments in support of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa mission from October through December.

Master Sgt. Reginald Winborne and Staff Sgt. Brenda Adams were selected as the SNCO and NCO of the Quarter, respectively for the Air Force.

Adams, a Supply NCO with the 823rd Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron based out of Hurlburt Field, Fla., was lauded for coordinating \$500,000 in construction projects with

CJTF comptroller and contracting office.

She secured and tracked \$80,000 for two humanitarian construction projects in Ethiopia.

She spent countless hours visiting the local baby orphanage and was actively involved with the base chapel.

Winborne, who serves as the Anti-Terrorism Force Protection chief, provides for protection and training to all personnel, facilities and equipment supporting the CJTF-HOA area of operation.

The security forces NCO, based out of Robins AFB, Ga., was recognized for overseeing three classified U.S. Naval Brief Stop for Personnel force protec-

tion operations for assets totaling \$5 billion, and developing and instructing a train the trainer course for coalition forces, educating more than 50 Ethiopian armed forces personnel on installation security procedures.

He also completed two courses toward his bachelor's degree while maintaining a 3.5 grade point average and coached the 8th Tank Company intramural basketball team culminating the season with 12-2 record.

CJTF-HOA's mission is to conduct operations and training within the combined joint operating area to assist host nations in fostering a secure, stable environment and enabling regional stability.

AFAF campaign set to kick off at Hurlburt Field

By Capt. Mark Noon
16th MDG

The 2005 Air Force Assistance Fund campaign begins Feb. 28 and will continue through April 10.

This year's goal is to collect at least \$120,000, which was the amount raised by Team Hurlburt in 2004.

Hurlburt Field Airmen received more than \$300,000 in direct assistance from the AFAF in 2004; however, Team Hurlburt only raised \$70,000 for the Air Force Aid Society, which supports Airmen and their families in times of need. Support may include anything from educational grants to childcare, to numerous loans and grants for emergency situations.

This year, I challenge each of you to look into your heart, put aside any preconceived ideas and give however much you can. This can be set up through allotments from as little

as \$1 per month, or cash and check donations. Base and squadron fund-raisers will be hosted to help us reach our goal.

Last year, only eight Air Force bases reached their goals in money raised and participation percentages. This year, Hurlburt Field will be one of those bases. We need to see at least 50 percent participation from the entire base population, to include partner units.

Personnel are encouraged to follow the campaign in future editions of the COMMANDO to learn which fund-raisers one can participate in, and how to stay motivated toward our goal.

This is our goal; yours and mine. We're a team, and we need every member to participate.

For more information about the AFAF, contact any base AFAF project officer or call Master Sgt. Harold LaBare at 884-4947.

Spotlight

on...

Staff Sgt. Katisha Clark

Organization/Duty title: Air Force Special Operations Command, Information Management

Hometown: Austin, Texas

Hobbies: Working out, education, traveling and family

Contribution to the mission: Sergeant Clark is Headquarters AFSOC's workgroup manager and is responsible for the maintenance, troubleshooting and management of the local area network for the entire directorate.

Her dedication ensured a flawless accreditation for FM's SIPRNET resulting in uninterrupted messaging critical to maintaining fiscal guidance in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sergeant Clark enhanced leadership's 24/7 access and response capability to mission sensitive issues by implementing the BlackBerry system.

Editor's note: The COMMANDO highlights Airmen, junior NCOs, company grade officers, Department of Defense civilians and volunteers in units who do a great job and should receive day-to-day recognition. For more information on nominating an individual for the "Spotlight on..." column, supervisors can call the 16th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs Office at 884-7464.)

It's tax season: Visit base tax center

It's that time of the year again: time to line up to file your income tax.

Here at Hurlburt Field, the tax center has been established to assist active-duty members, their dependents and other individuals with military identification to file their taxes - for free.

Service members are encouraged to make their appointments now.

Legal center officials advise customers to bring in all W-2 forms, social security verification, bank account routing numbers and if possible, last year's tax filings. For those whose spouses are currently deployed, a power of attorney will also be necessary.

Officials are also asking for volunteers to help at the tax center, with an approximate four hours of work daily. The base tax center will remain operational until April 14.

The tax center hours are as follows: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4:30 p.m. On Tuesday and Thursday, the tax center will be open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 2:30 to 6 p.m.

For those who don't have appointments, the only walk-in day is Wednesday.

The tax center is located at 304 Terry Avenue in Building 90137.

To volunteer, or for more information, call the tax center at 884-7542.

Week in History

The following extraordinary events occurred this week in military history:

Feb. 6, 1967 - The North American Aerospace Defense Command's Space Defense Center moved into Cheyenne Mountain, Colo., completing the movement of all units into the hardened, underground facility.

Feb. 6, 1991 - Reserve Capt. Robert S. Wain of the 706th Tactical Fighter Squadron scored the first-ever A-10 Warthog air-to-air kill by shooting down an Iraqi helicopter.

Feb. 8, 1965 - The U.S. Air Force performs its first retaliatory air strike in North Vietnam. A North American F-100 Super Sabre flew cover for attacking South Vietnamese fighter aircraft, suppressing ground fire in the target area.

F-100 Super Sabre



Commissary gets set for grand re-opening

By Cherie Huntington
DeCA

If you see a giant pickle dressed in an Army private uniform, a life-size candy "kiss" and maybe the ever-popular Tony the Tiger strolling into the commissary on Thursday, you'll know grand re-opening day festivities are underway.

Ribbon-cutting ceremonies start at 8:30 a.m., immediately followed by store opening. Surcharge dollars paid by customers to the tune of \$9.4 million funded this major renovation, which started nearly two years ago.

"It's such an honor and thrill to provide this gorgeous, state-of-the-art facility to all our customers," said Margaret Stanley, store director. "We're proud to

provide savings you've earned in a modern store you deserve."

Most commissaries close a day or two prior to such events, but that's not the case here. "The store will look extra-nice on grand re-opening day, but we'll complete the finishing touches after regular shopping hours for our customers' convenience," said Ms. Stanley.

Finishing touches include setting up lots of food demonstration and sample stations, and possibly giving a chamois swipe or two on the new car, valued at more than \$13,000, to be given away to a lucky customer after a two-week registration period.

The store's sales floor expanded by 10,000 square feet, featuring the "latest and greatest" in décor, lighting and conveniences, such as longer aisles, a nearly



Courtesy photo

A 2005 Chevy Aveo will be given away to a qualified commissary customer Feb. 28.

doubled produce department and deli/bakery, sushi bar, express lanes on each end of the checkout stands and expanded Grab-and-Go section. Store shelves gained approximately 5,000 items in the product lineup.

Patrons can expect lots of giveaways such as shopping sprees, gift bags, samples and coupons as well as impressive sale prices.

Local radio stations will broadcast live from the commissary during the ceremony.

Ravens fly out at moment's notice

By Master Sgt. D.R. Hansford
16th SFS

The Phoenix Raven program was established by the Air Mobility Command, in direct response to the bombing of Khobar Towers and the rapidly increasing level of global terrorist activity.

To meet the challenges of a blistering operations tempo in an increasingly turbulent world, there was clearly a need for specially trained security personnel, capable of deploying worldwide on little or no notice.

The Phoenix Raven certification course was established in 1997 at the Air Mobility Warfare Center, in Fort Dix, N.J. Ravens are trained to protect Air Force assets in transit through countries deemed high threat by the AMC Threat Working Group, or anywhere additional security is needed to counter local threats.

The certification course has evolved into a highly respected course that's as mentally and physically demanding as any other career field can offer. Air Force security forces candidates, federal air marshals, Army, Navy, and Coast Guard police complete a nearly three-week curriculum that teaches them to protect U.S. assets and personnel in foreign countries.

"The candidates are exposed to a regimen that includes: cross-cultural communication, legal considerations, embassy operations, counter-surveillance techniques, verbal Judo, airfield assessment surveys, aircraft searching, armed and unarmed self defense techniques, dynamics of international terrorism, and more than 70 uses of force scenarios," said Staff Sgt. Bobby Heath, 16th SFS Raven graduate.

Air Force security forces candidates who successfully pass this grueling course are awarded a Raven number, which they will have throughout their career. However, only three out of every four candidates graduate and receive a number.

"Earning my Raven number was one of the most fulfilling accomplishments of my Air Force career," said Capt. Tara Opielewski, 16th SFS Raven graduate. "It's something I'll never forget."

The 16th SFS has 20 Phoenix Ravens who perform security missions and provide fly-away support teams in support of Air Force Special Operations Command, 16th Special Operations Wing and supporting units. The travel itineraries of some AFSOC units often include austere locations that require extra protection for Air Force assets while on the ground.

The 16th SFS Ravens typically deploy in teams of two, three or four. Since Sept. 11, 2001, Raven teams have been ready and available to provide aircraft security, conducting comprehensive airfield assessments to ensure Air Force assets are protected adequately while deployed. These assessments assist major command threat working groups and Air Force security forces in determining the force protection climate at each airfield where the Air Force operates.

In most cases, the Ravens are the only U.S. security forces present, with no back up available for many miles. In their role as elite ambassadors of our Air Force and our entire nation, Raven members learn to appreciate and respect many different cultures.

"The future looks bright for the 16th SFS Ravens or Fly Away teams," Captain Opielewski said. "Their role will become even more crucial in the coming years. As the AFSOC aircraft continue to fly into austere environments or unprotected airfields, the 16th SFS will increase its number of Phoenix Raven certified personnel, in order to fulfill Hurlburt Field's piece of the global reach mission.

"As long as we continue to operate with limited manpower and logistical support in high-threat and remote locales," she said, "Raven or Fly Away teams will be called upon to protect the people and assets of the best Air Force in the world."

Airmen must adhere to war trophy mailing restrictions

By Roger Kolkena
2nd Air Postal Squadron

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany - Throughout history, Soldiers have come home with souvenirs from battle.

Many of these war-related items end up on display in museums and showcases.

Although it's tempting to bring back reminders of service in a military campaign, with few exceptions, taking or retaining individual souvenirs or trophies is prohibited.

"It's against the law to take certain souvenirs from a war zone," said 1st Lt. Andrew Ignash, 2nd Air Postal Squadron postal operations flight command-

er. "You can go to jail for mailing an illegal object".

Shipping weapons as personal property is punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Lieutenant Ignash said.

War trophies, defined as enemy weapons, ammunition, explosives or items of equipment, are nonmailable. This includes live or spent rounds, pistols, machine guns, weapons magazines and anti-personnel mines.

Most munitions and military articles of equipment may not be mailed; however, war trophies that obviously pose no safety risk, such as enemy uniform items and flags, may be mailed, Lieutenant Ignash said.

"If you're unsure whether

an item can be legally imported, don't try to mail it," said Tech. Sgt. Craig Thomas, the squadron's postal manager. "Ask your postmaster to clarify the rules, follow the regulations as written, and there should be no problem."

Almost all parcels move as cargo on commercial airliners, Sergeant Thomas said.

Mailing war trophies can cause mail delays, bomb evacuations and confiscation of parcels when detected during X-rays by foreign governments and airline officials.

For more information, contact officials at the post office, customs office or legal office.

WELCOME, Continued from Page 1

entire squadron was deployed, operating from several locations simultaneously to unseat the Taliban rulers and install the interim government.

"I've been deployed 50 percent of the time - 50-60 days at a time - since the beginning of the war," said Maj. James Piel, 8th SOS pilot. "The most difficult aspect is the travel and being able to balance life. So, it's nice to have so much squadron support."

Major Piel's wife, Debbie, looks forward to returning to a normalcy in the home.

"It's going to be great having him here every day and weekend," Mrs. Piel said. "It's a nice change."

When Operation Iraqi Freedom kicked off, the 8th SOS was once again at the forefront. Its crews were some of the first to cross the Iraqi border as hostilities began, providing specialized airpower for coalition conventional and Special Operations Forces.

Throughout this period, the unit flew 2,555 combat sorties for a combined total of 6,778 combat flying hours, performed 307 combat airdrops, delivered 6.75 million pounds of cargo and supplied 1.3 million pounds of fuel to 275 helicopters in support of combat operations.

"You've landed in places and accomplished missions that no one would have thought was possible," Colonel Hale said. "You've taken combat air power to the enemy. We're closing out this chapter of the GWOT today for the 8th SOS. You represent the best of what America has to offer."

The 8th SOS, assigned to the 16th Special Operations Wing, is a geographically separated unit located at nearby Duke Field.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Ali Flisek

A boy patiently waits for his father, Maj. James Piel, a member of the 8th SOS, to arrive home following a long deployment overseas.

The primary mission of the 8th SOS is insertion, extraction and resupply of unconventional warfare forces and equipment into hostile or enemy-controlled territory using air-land or airdrop procedures.

Numerous secondary missions include psychological operations, aerial reconnaissance and helicopter air refueling. To accomplish these varied missions, the 8th SOS uses the MC-130E Combat Talon I, a highly specialized variant of the Lockheed C-130.

SOUTHERN CLASSIC GUN
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568403
TROY
UNIV
2X5

MILITARY MEDIA
COMMANDO/BLACK H
578334
2 X 5.00



Valentine's Day has mysterious, romantic historical background

Every February, across the country, candy, flowers and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine.

But who is this mysterious saint and why do we celebrate this holiday?

The history of Valentine's Day – and its patron saint – is shrouded in mystery. But, we do know February has long been a month of romance. St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition.

Today, the Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred.

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men – his crop of potential soldiers.

Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help

Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured.

According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that Valentine fell in love with a young girl – who may have been his jailor's daughter – who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it's alleged that he wrote her a letter, which he signed 'From your Valentine,' an expression that is still used today.

Although the truth behind the Valentine legends are murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and, most importantly, romantic figure. It's no surprise that by the Middle Ages, Valentine was one of the most popular saints in England and France. (Courtesy of www.history-channel.com)

CALVARY BAPTIST
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2 X 4.00

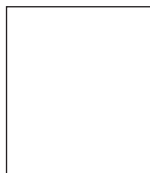
Look Who's Talking:

What's the best gift you've received for Valentine's Day?



Airman 1st Class
Devin Blue,
16th CES

"(One year,) I received a big, stuffed teddy bear."



Staff Sgt.
Iveth Galvez Guzman,
16th MSS

"My mother gave me a box of chocolates last year...it showed me her unconditional love."



Staff Sgt.
Tasha Tyler,
14th WPS

"Every day is Valentine's Day for me and my husband."

Sweethearts word search

I A R S E E N A T N
A F R P A R T Y C E
U C A N D Y R E D F
T V A L E N T I N E
D H E A R T H F A B
G Z V U S T T R R R
I B A L O V E I I U
H U G Y I S C E T A
A R X A V S O N M R
L A S W C A R D S Y

Heart
Card
Red
Party
February
Love
Candy
Friend
Hug
Valentine

Fun Valentines Day facts, figures, tidbits:

- n The United States, Canada, Mexico, United Kingdom, France and Australia all celebrate Valentine's Day.
 - n Seventy-four percent of Americans celebrate Valentine's Day.
 - n Approximately 192 million cards are exchanged Valentine's Day.
 - n Some attribute the first "Valentine's Card" being sent from Charles Duc d'Orleans in 1415 to his wife, while a prisoner in the Tower of London.
 - n "Love Birds" derives from the belief that birds chose their mates Feb. 14.
 - n Cupid was the symbol for the Roman God of Love.
 - n About 15 percent of women in the United States send themselves flowers Valentine's Day.
 - n Valentine's Day is fourth in candy sales behind Halloween, Easter and Christmas.
 - n The first Valentine's Day box of chocolates was introduced by Richard Cadbury in 1868.
 - n Teachers receive the most Valentine's Day cards.
- (Courtesy of <http://www.infostarbase.com/holidays/valentine/facts.html>)



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Parents, keep your child aligned...

Minimize their thumb sucking

By Senior Airman Brandy Porrata
16th MDOS

Children often suck thumbs, fingers, and pacifiers.

This "non-nutritive" sucking is very natural during the first two years of a child's life. However, parents should pay close attention.

If this practice seems to gradually diminish over time, the child will most likely stop.

Beyond the age of two, persistent thumb/finger-sucking or pacifier use could lead to problems with teeth and jaw alignment.

Toddlers with such habits should be evaluated by your family dentist.

Early detection and action may prevent long-term complications.



Honoring Black History Month:

African-American inventors important part of history

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Ashmon
25th IOS

The following is part two of remarkable African American inventors continued from Feb. 4:

The 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment was the first African-American regiment from a northern state to join the U.S. Army during the Civil War. Sergeant William Canney of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers was the first African American to earn the Congressional Medal of Honor. He was one of 20 African Americans who fought during the Civil War to receive



1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment



Sarah Walker

Congressional Medals of Honor, although the honor was not awarded until May 23, 1900.

Sarah Walker, inventor and entrepreneur, created a line of hair-care products especially for African-American women. Ms. Walker, the daughter of Louisiana sharecroppers and nicknamed



Garrett Morgan

"Madame C.J.," was the first woman to sell products via mail order and to organize a nationwide membership of door-to-door agents.

Garrett Morgan, son of former slaves businessman and inventor, patented the first traffic signal in 1923. Mr. Morgan

made national news when he used another of his inventions - the gas mask - to rescue several men trapped in a tunnel beneath Lake Erie. His mask was soon adopted by firemen around the world and was also refined for use by the U.S. Army during World War I.

Dr. Charles Drew, American surgeon, conducted pioneering work in blood storage and transfusion techniques. Dr. Drew

confirmed that blood plasma lasts longer than whole blood, a medical breakthrough that enabled the creation of the modern blood bank. In 1939, he used his new understanding of blood storage and transfusion to help establish the first blood banks to serve the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II.



Dr. Charles Drew

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Proactive measures ensure AADD program success

By Tech. Sgt. Albert Greig
AADD

Airmen Against Drunk Driving is a program run "by Airmen for Airmen" to eliminate drinking and driving among Hurlburt Field members.

AADD is a volunteer organization comprised of Airmen - enlisted members and officers - devoting their spare time, normally an entire weekend, to look out for their comrades-in-arms to spare them from harm.

On numerous occasions, the AADD volunteers have been disrespected by intoxicated Airmen. The following are some proactive measures to help make our AADD program more effective

AADD Rules of Engagement:

n Take along a designated driver. Many nightclubs offer free non-alcoholic drinks for designated drives. AADD isn't to be considered as a designated driver.

n If you have money, call a cab/taxi. Some cab/taxi services offer military discounts, including American Cab Company, Destin (269-1977); American Cab Company, Fort Walton Beach (796-1999).

n Make arrangements to spend the night at a friend's house. If you drink, don't drive under the influence. Call a trusted friend for a ride or call a trusted friend while at a house party/residence. AADD doesn't have enough drivers to support residential pick-ups.

n As a last resort, call AADD at 884-8844 and remember:

n Be kind to the AADD dispatcher.

n Be kind and considerate to the on-call AADD driver. It could take up to an hour before pick-up, depending on distances traveled.

n If you change your mind or find other means, call dispatch to cancel the AADD ride.

n Drivers will take you to your place of residence only. AADD isn't responsible for returning Airmen to their vehicle or driving them to another bar or club.

n All AADD drivers reserve the right to refuse to pickup anyone, especially if they feel they're at risk, or their vehicle is at risk of damage.

n Don't abuse the AADD program, which is sponsored only by volunteers.

n If you've used AADD, support our program, "pay it forward" and commit to volunteer a few hours of your time.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Mayra Casanova at 884-4438 or Airman 1st Class April Salgado at 884-6238.

Note: AADD does not promote prohibition but rather safe, responsible alcohol consumption.



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Tops in Blue seeks musicians for band

By Steve VanWert
Air Force Services Agency
Public Affairs

SAN ANTONIO - There are many words that spring to mind when you think of Tops in Blue, the Air Force's premier entertainment group, said Jeri White, Tops in Blue production coordinator at Air Force Services Agency here.

"You think of 'high energy', 'world renown,' even 'expeditionary,'" she said. "You think of 'singers,' 'dancers' and 'comedians.'"

But one phrase you never use to describe Tops in Blue is "a capella."

"It's all about the music," Ms. White said. "The singers can't sing without it, and dancers can't dance without it. It's the beat that keeps Tops in Blue whirling around the stage and thrilling audiences worldwide."

"We're looking to fill a complete band," Ms. White

said. "We need keyboard players, drummers and guitarists. We also need to fill the horn and rhythm sections."

"(Contestants) can be self-taught and don't have to be able to read music," Ms. White said. "All they need is talent and a strong desire to improve during the touring season."

Tops in Blue is an all-Air Force entertainment troupe that provides a free, high-energy, 90-minute musical extravaganza to military forces stationed worldwide. In its mission to boost morale, the team visits more than 120 locations worldwide in more than 30 countries, entertaining more than 350,000 military and family members from May to February each year.

"Our goal is simple," said Tom Edwards, director of Air Force Entertainment. "To reach as many people as possible and to thank them for

their commitment to the Air Force."

Now is the time for Air Force instrumentalists, as well as singers, dancers and comedians to compete for spots in this elite group.

The Worldwide Talent Contest is March 6 to 14 at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. Besides competing for recognition as the best performers in five separate categories, participants also will vie for 30 positions in Tops in Blue 2005.

Although the application deadline has passed, people still interested in competing in the Air Force Talent Contest and auditioning for Tops in Blue 2005 should call the Air Force Entertainment Office at (210) 652-6566 or DSN 487-6566.

Airmen can obtain more information and an application through the Air Force Services Web site at www.afsv.af.mil.

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Mission Systems Specialists (above) with the 4th Aircraft Maintenance Unit install an all light level television turret camera onto an AC-130U Gunship. Airman 1st Class David Collins (right), 4th AMU, prepares to lubricate an AC-130U Spooky Gunship flap.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Derek Blumke

Maintaining mission success:

Aircraft maintenance unit keeps aircraft flying

By Staff Sgt. Derek Blumke
16th AMXS

Have you ever wondered how that Gunship, PAVE LOW, or Talon II flying overhead got in the air?

It takes everyone assigned to the 16th Special Operations Wing doing their job — from the 16th Services Squadron personnel at the Adelbert Fitness Center to the pilots flying the planes — to make our mission succeed.

But, it's the last piece of the puzzle that actually "heaves our dagger" into the Al-Qaida training camps in Afghanistan, and the insurgents in Iraq. Our aircraft maintainers are the ones making the final steps before those airplanes leave the ground. It takes the 16th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and 16th Helicopter Maintenance Squadron crew chiefs and every other maintenance specialists working around the clock to make it happen.

Regardless of rain, sleet, snow or 120-degree heat, the members of the 16th SOW maintenance squadron's are on the flight line putting the mission before themselves day in and day out.

While at home-station, the members of the 16th AMXS/HMXS train to be as competent and knowledgeable as possible, by launching their airplanes for air interdiction, combat drops and

many other different types of training missions. So, when deployed, there's no question of their ability to send their Gunship to strike its target, or Talon II or PAVE LOW to deliver our Pararescuers to save lives.

Humboldt Field's aircraft and mission set it apart from other bases and wings. No other squadron in the Air Force or country in the world is responsible for the assets and tasks that they're assigned. No one else can accomplish these missions with the precision, accuracy and reliability of the 16th SOW.

Within this responsibility, our maintainers must go that extra mile because no one else has the AC-130 Gunships which have been in service for more than 35 years. What other unit is responsible for aircraft that have been more "personally" involved in more than seven wars and countless other conflicts and contingencies? These maintainers must put these aircraft back together after reaching its 20,000th flying hour, firing its 500,000 105mm round and receiving its 100th modification.

The next time you see an Airman wearing an AMXS/HMXS hat and covered in grease and oil, thank them. Thank them because they're the ones tucking their children to bed before heading to work at night and working in some of the most unimaginable conditions, yet performing far beyond anyone's expectations. They're the

Senior Airman Brett Mazzara, 16th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, reviews aircraft forms for discrepancies prior to launch.

ones ensuring our operational squadrons are able to keep our brothers and sisters-in-arms safe while deployed abroad.

Editor's Note: Sergeant Blumke is an AC-130H aircraft maintainer and unit public affairs representative for the 16AMXS/16AMU. UPARs act as the "eyes and ears" of a unit, playing a significant role in passing along or writing newsworthy information about their respective unit to the 16th SOW Public Affairs Office for potential coverage.

If you're interested in becoming a UPAR or if you have a story idea, contact the COMMANDO staff at 884-7464.

Hurlburt Happenings

Military

Reunion

The 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing/55th Wing Association will hold a reunion March 9-13 in San Diego, Calif. All members past and present are invited to attend. For more information, call Lt. Col. Bill Lewis at (619) 523-2110, e-mail bill.lewis1@att.net or visit www.55srwa.org.

Shipping requirements

Air Force policy makes it mandatory for all individuals who ship government assets through the Outbound Freight Office to automate their DD Form 1149, Requisition and Invoice/Shipping, application. To complete the process, individuals will need to access the Air Force Materiel Command Logistics Support office Web site at <https://www.afmc-mil.wpafb.af.mil/hqafmc/lg/lso/lol/> and follow instructions for setting up and registering an account. For more information, call 884-2585 or 884-7227.

USAFSOS course

The U.S. Air Force Special Operations School will hold the Introduction to Special Operations Course Feb. 24-25 at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., for those who are new to, returning to, or professionally affiliated with the U.S. Special Operations Command.

ISOC provides military and civilian members with a joint understanding of Special Operations Forces, to include structure, assets and capabilities. For more information, call Lt. Col. Tom Marocchini at DSN 263-5224 or visit <https://www.hurlburt.af.mil/milonly/usafsos>.

Community

Clinic closure

The 16th Medical Group will be closed Wednesday at 11 a.m. for training. However, normal clinic operations will be in effect until 11 a.m. For any emergency needs, the Eglin Air Force Base emergency room will be open.

Awards banquet

In honor of military traditions, Hurlburt Field provides special recognition to individuals whose superior duty performance, dedication and efforts have led them to become top-notch professional military leaders. The 2004 Annual Awards Banquet will be held Feb. 17 at 6 p.m. at the Emerald Coast Conference Center on Okaloosa Island. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased through unit first sergeants.

Dress for military is semi-formal or mess dress, and civilians should wear coat and tie attire. No hats or nametags are needed; women must wear skirts - not slacks. People are asked to reference AFI 36-2903, Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact your unit first sergeant.

Advisory board meeting

Family member programs is conducting a consolidated parent advisory board meeting Thursday, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the youth/community center for school age, child development center and

family childcare programs. Parents are encouraged to bring a lunch. The agenda includes a review of annual calendars, a joint planning discussion and recommendations for future parent training topics. For more information, call Jaime Gries at 884-2953.

APAH committee meeting

An Asian-Pacific Heritage Month committee meeting will be held Thursday at noon in J.R. Rockers' Destination Point Room. For more information, call Master Sgt. Cecilio Bartolome at 884-2246.

CGOC meeting

A Company Grade Officers Council meeting will be held Feb. 24 at 3:30 p.m. at Connie's Hooch. For more information, call 1st Lt. Shannon Ouder at 884-3823.

Teen aviation camp

The youth/teen center is accepting applications for the sixth annual Air Force Teen Aviation Camp to be held June 4-9 at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., until March 2. The camp is for students who will be high school sophomores or juniors during the 2005-2006 school year.

This Air Force Services Program, which is conducted in conjunction with the academy, is for eligible youth program users who are interested in attending the Air Force Academy or making a career in the Air Force. Selected teens will participate in outdoor and class activities: swimming, flight simulator training, wilderness orienteering and team-building exercises. For more information, call the youth center at 884-6355.

Armed Forces Vacation Club

The Armed Forces Vacation Club is a program that offers eligible Department of Defense affiliated personnel (active-duty and retired) a flat rate of \$264 per unit per week on certain condominium rentals at resorts around the world.

For more information, visit <https://www.afv-club.com/vacationclub.asp> or call (800) 724-9988. Provide installation number 57 for Hurlburt Field.

Youth of the Year

Applications for Hurlburt Field's Youth of the Year are available at the youth/community center and are due by Tuesday. Candidates must be 14-18 years old as of Jan. 31 and legal dependents of active-duty military personnel stationed at Hurlburt Field. For more information, call youth programs at 884-6355.

HSC auction

The Hurlburt Spouses' Club invites all military and Department of Defense civilian identification cardholders and their guests to attend an auction of fine art today at the Soundside club. Viewings will begin at 5:30 p.m., followed by hors d'oeuvres, tea and coffee at 6 p.m. The auction will begin at 6:30 p.m. The cost is \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door. For reservations, call Karin Heaton at 515-0371 or e-mail MH60heater@aol.com.

Star Gaze 2005

The base library will hold Star Gaze 2005 at the Gator Lakes Golf Course Saturday from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. The Escambia Amateur Astronomers Association will set up six to eight high-powered telescopes for participants to view a four-day-old new moon,

the planet Saturn, the Andromeda Galaxy and the comet Machholz. The event is free for all government-issued identification cardholders and their guests. For more information, call the library at 884-6266.

EOSC luncheon

The Eglin Officers' Spouses Club will hold a luncheon at the Sand Dollar Lounge Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. The guest speaker will be Priscilla Bonjour, a local Niceville pastel artist. To make reservations for the lunch and arrange childcare, call Eileen Workman at 314-9755 or Karen Kirk at 897-0533.

Recycling mascot contest

The Hurlburt Field Recycling Program is looking for a mascot to help educate the base community on the importance of recycling. The grand prize winner and runners up will receive gifts from the members of Hurlburt Field's Recycling Team and will be officially announced at the 2005 Earth Day celebration April 23. Submit entries via e-mail to robin.armhold@hurlburt.af.mil or by mail to:

Robin Armhold, 16th CES/CEV
415 Independence Road
Hurlburt Field, FL 32544

All entries must be submitted by Monday, with the entrant's name, phone number, e-mail address and association with the base (active-duty, retiree, dependant, civil service, contractor, etc.) For more information, call 884-7969.

Kids' Day Out

Lighthouse of Faith Community Church invites military personnel to bring their children to enjoy free music, puppet shows, character lessons and refreshments Saturday and Feb. 26 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. for Kids' Day Out. The church is located at 755 Lovejoy Road, Fort Walton Beach. For more information, call 244-2003.

Volunteer

Women's History Month

The military equal opportunity office invites volunteers to assist in organizing, preparing and supporting events for Women's History Month, which is held throughout March. All positions will need to be filled, including chairperson, vice chairperson and treasurer. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Natasha Hollomon at 884-2631.

Classes

HAWC classes

The following classes are available at the health and wellness center:

Diabetes Nutrition Follow Up - Tuesday, 9 a.m.
Fitness 101 - Tuesday, 9:30 a.m.
Fitness Improvement Program - Tuesday, 1 p.m.
Body Composition Improvement Program - Tuesday, 2 p.m.
Healthy Kids Fitness - Tuesday, 3:30 p.m.
Healthy Kids Nutrition - Tuesday, 4 p.m.
Prenatal Nutrition - Wednesday, 8:30 a.m.
Prenatal Fitness - Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.
Lean On Me - Thursday, 1 p.m.

Hurlburt Field Chapel



Youth: 5 p.m. Sunday
 Religious Education: September - May
 Protestant Services
 Sunday, 8:30 a.m. (Traditional worship)
 11:30 a.m. (Contemporary worship)
 Religious Education: August - May
 Youth and Singles groups available
 Jewish Services (882-2111)
 Sabbath services: Friday, 7:30 p.m., Eglin
 Chapel Center
 Muslim Services (882-2111), Eglin
 Chapel Center
 Junuah: Friday, 12:45 p.m.
 For more information, call 884-7795.

Catholic Mass
 Saturday, 5:30 p.m.
 Sunday, 7:15 and 10 a.m.
 Confessions: Saturday, 4:30 to 5 p.m., or
 by request

To check out Air Force TV or
 Radio News visit: <http://af.feedroom.com> or www.af.mil/news
 and click on TV or radio to find out
 what's happening around
 the Air Force.



At the movies

Prices are \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children.
 Movies start at 7 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Hurlburt Field Friday and Sunday Meet the Fockers (PG-13) Saturday The Life Aquatic (R)	Eglin Air Force Base Friday White Noise (PG-13) Saturday and Sunday Fat Albert (PG)
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For up-to-date movie schedules, call Hurlburt Field at 884-7648 or Eglin Air Force Base at 882-1066.
 For movie information, visit <http://www.aafes.com/ems/oonus/hurlburt.htm>.



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Hurlburt Hawks: Next generation skates it up

By Airman 1st Class
James Dickens
16th SOW Public Affairs

In addition to the Hurlburt Hawks, the base roller hockey team, there are five youth leagues here.

Hurlburt Field's youth eight-and-under roller hockey team hosted Gulf Breeze's Black Widows Saturday.

Although the Hawks lost the game to the bigger, more experienced Black Widows 8-5, the player's skills have drastically improved since the start of the season in January.

They're doing a great job considering 60 percent of the players are new to roller hockey, said Jason "JD" Davis, six-and-under, eight-and-under and 10-and-under coach.

"These guys and girls have come a long way in a short period of time," Davis said. "They have gone from holding the hockey stick upside down and falling every third stride, to zipping from goal line to goal line with no problem at all."

This wouldn't have been possible without all the hard work from the coaching staff to include: Ben Iannucci, 12-and-under coach; Robb Schmitt, 14-and-under coach, said Davis.

Hurlburt Field also has two six-and-under teams, with children as young as Mr. Davis's two-year-old son, that play each other to hone their skills for the eight-and-under youth league.

"It's awesome to watch these new players and parents

Four-year-old Canse Davis, Coach Jason Davis's son, mixes it up with the older boys during the six-and-under game Saturday.

enjoying and forming their own new found love for the game. Their smiles make it all worth it in the end," Davis said.

"This season wouldn't have been possible without the continuous support from 16th Services Squadron members to include: Bob Talley, Ed Vieth, Jim Harriott, John Proctor and Don Martinez," Davis said.

The six-and-under team plays at the hockey rink located by the tennis courts every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. The eight-and-under team also plays there on Saturdays at 10 a.m., followed by the 10-and-under team at 10:45 a.m., the 12-and-under team at 11:30 a.m. and the 14-and-under team at 12:30 p.m.

Photos by Airman 1st Class Ali Flisek

Alejandro Charette, son of Coach Ron Charette, denies a Black Widow player from scoring during the eight-and-under game Saturday.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bernice Stoffel

Decided by basket

The 16th Services Squadron defeated the Chiefs to clinch the over 40 basketball championship Feb. 3. The Chiefs won the first game 49-47 and forced a final showdown.

The 16th SVS squeezed by the Chiefs by only a basket to take the Championship 44-42.



Fit Eagle Competition

The 15th annual Fit Eagle Competition will be held at the Aderholt Fitness Center Feb. 18 at 7 a.m. Letters of intent for the squadron-versus-squadron event are due Monday at noon. Events include a 5K run, push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, tug-of-war and a team-building "mystery" challenge. For more information, contact your unit sports representatives or call Staff Sgt. Tamara Rosa at 884-4412.

Golf tournament

Society of American Military Engineers Emerald Coast Post Golf Tournament is scheduled for March 3 at Eglin Air Force Base Eagle Course. The four person scramble "best ball" is scheduled to start at noon. Entry fee is \$45 per person and all proceeds will benefit S.A.M.E. Scholarship Fund. For more information, call Thom Wahl at 884-5186.

Okaloosa Track and Field Games

The Non-Commissioned Officers Association is looking for huggers, greeters and timers for the Okaloosa County Track and Field Games Feb. 25. The games will be held at Silver Sands School, located at 349 Holmes Blvd., from 9 a.m. to noon. For more information call, Bob Love at 884-2695.

Womens varisty Basketball

The women's varisty basketball team will be playing Fort Benning Saturday at the Aderholt Fitness Center. The games are scheduled for 1 and 3 p.m. and are the last games of the regular season.